
From: Nassif, Julianne (DPH)
Sent: Wednesday, May 21, 2008 3:55 PM
To: 'mray@beverlyma.gov'
Cc: Salemi, Charles (DPH); Stevenson, Allan (DPH)
Subject: Major Cities Chiefs Meeting

Chief Ray,

It was nice to see you again at the Forensic Sciences Advisory Board meeting. Thanks for your offer to bring some of the DPH concerns to your meeting of the the major cities police chiefs. There are two specific issues that I hope you can address with the group this week:

1. Diverting some Middlesex County cities to the Amherst Laboratory for forensic drug testing. We would ask that 5 cities try this on a pilot basis. It would help alleviate some of the backlog and safety concerns regarding sample storage at the Boston laboratory. While the drive may be a little longer distance wise, it could be shorter time wise due to far less traffic in the westerly direction. ***The major advantage for cities to participate in the pilot would be a much reduced turn around time.*** The average turnaround time in Boston is currently 69 days and 21 days in Amherst. Even with the increased sample load, Amherst will be able to analyze and report their test results in approximately half the time of the Boston laboratory. Any city or town interested in participating should call or email me as soon as possible, so that we can begin expediting those samples. If successful, we could offer it to other communities.

2. Encourage officers to submit only the evidence required to make the case. For example, if the defendant has a bag of marijuana, marijuana cigarettes and stubs, it is unlikely that the laboratory will test all of these items since the results would not affect the charges filed. However, it takes valuable Drug laboratory staff time to log-in, visually examine and provide certificates for each of the items. If the police departments could help us by streamlining the samples submitted for analysis, we could use our resources more efficiently to analyze the evidence and report sample results.

Again, thanks for you help with this. If you think it would be helpful, either I or one of the Drug lab staff could come to one of your future meetings to discuss ideas and/or procedures related to forensic drug testing.

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